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Blast Back!

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ANCIENT EGYPT

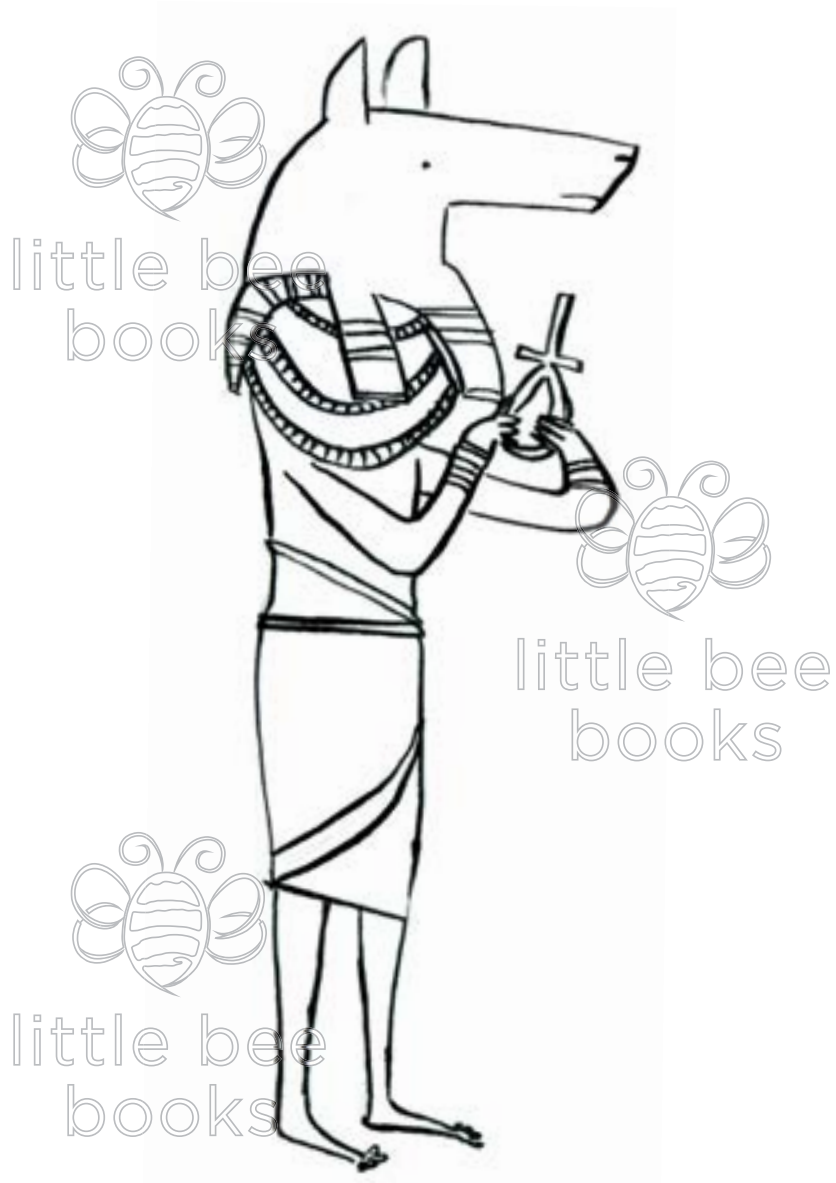
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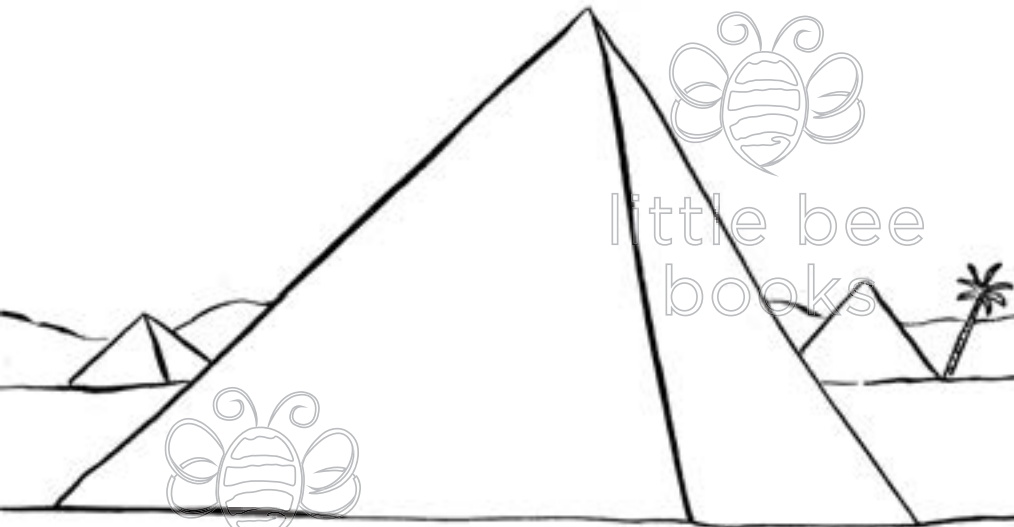
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INTRODUCTION

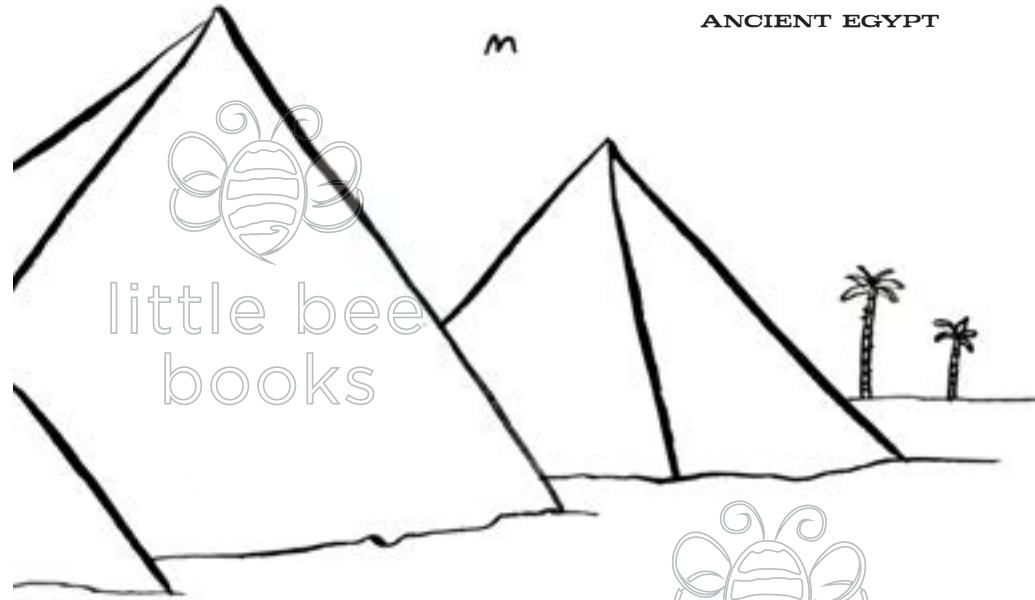
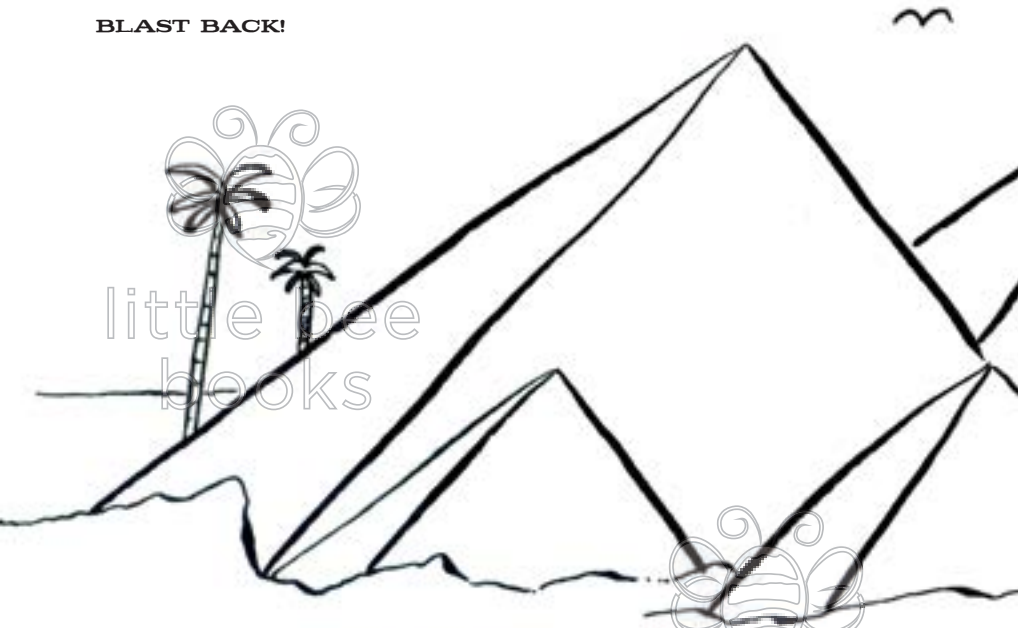
When you hear people talk about “Ancient Egypt,” you might think of things like mummies and pyramids. But what was Ancient Egypt *really* like? What did people do for fun? What kinds of pets did they have? And what were those pyramids for, anyway?

Let’s blast back in time for a little adventure and find out. . . .



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

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You're wondering: What exactly is Ancient Egypt?

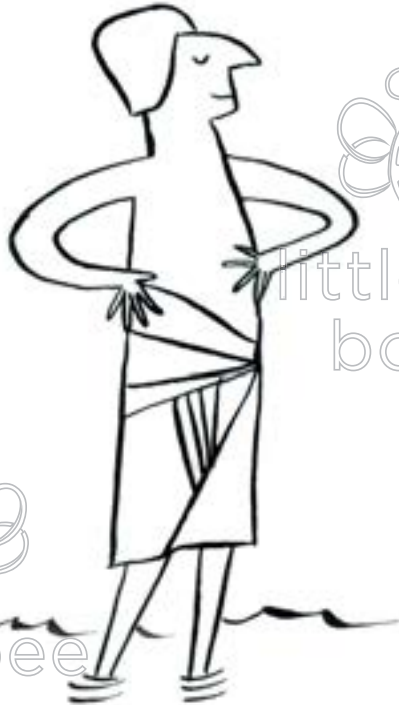
Ancient Egypt is a civilization. "Civilization" means the society, culture, and way of life of a particular time and place.

It's "ancient" because it's more than five thousand years old.



Ancient Egypt would not have been possible without the Nile River and rain. Lots of rain. Every summer, heavy rains to the south of Egypt made the water level of the river rise. The river flooded and soaked the lands along its banks.

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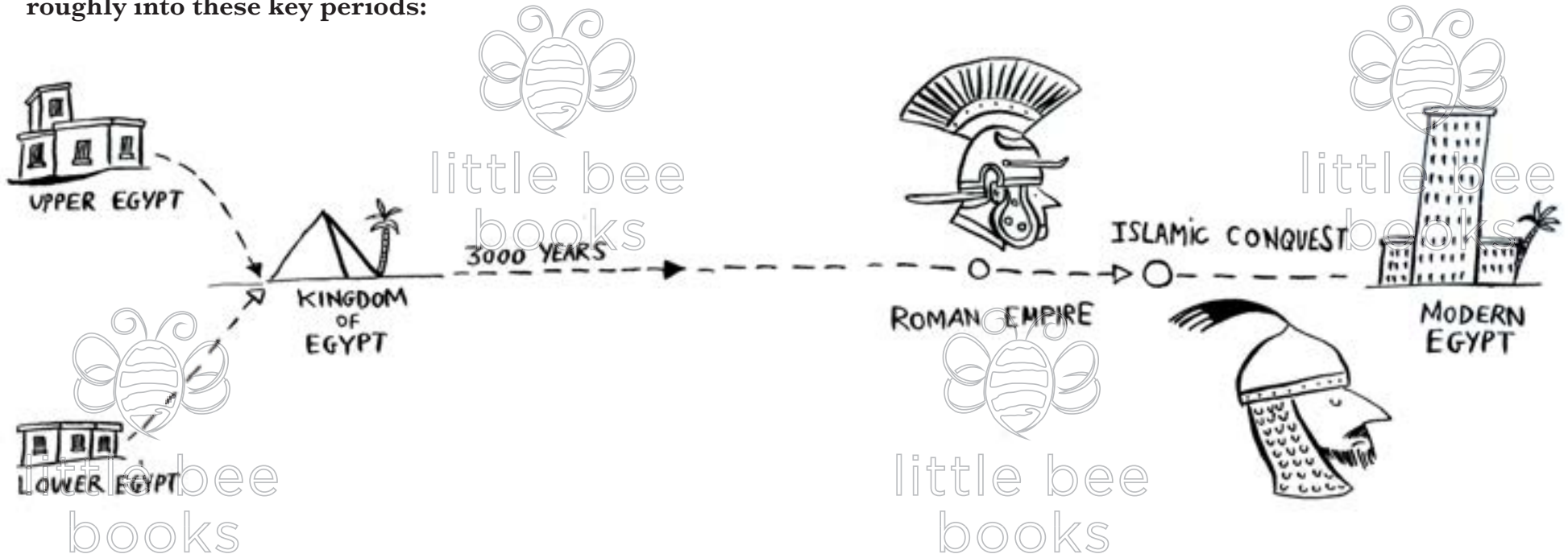
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This watery, goopy mud became rich, fertile soil that was perfect for farming. People moved to this area and began growing wheat, barley, flax, and other crops. They formed villages. Eventually, they split into two districts: Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt, also known as the “Two Lands.”

Around five thousand years ago, the Two Lands united and became the kingdom of Egypt. This event is often considered to be the beginning of Ancient Egypt. The civilization lasted for

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Ancient Egypt can be divided roughly into these key periods:

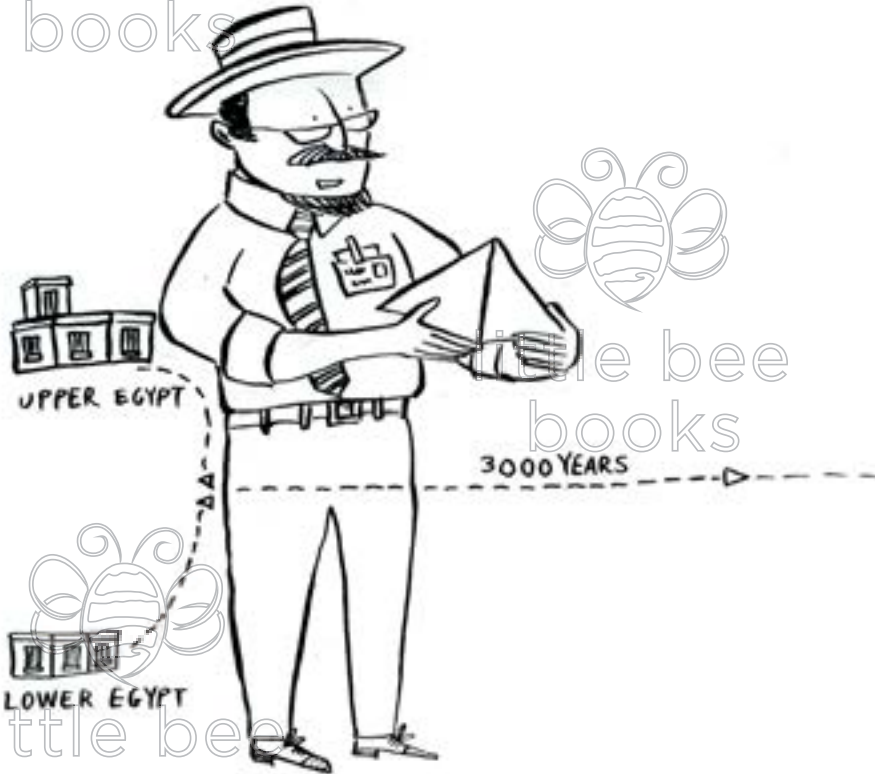


approximately three thousand years, until Egypt was folded into the Roman Empire (and possibly even later, until the Islamic conquest of Egypt). The country of Egypt still exists today, although it is no longer called a “kingdom.”

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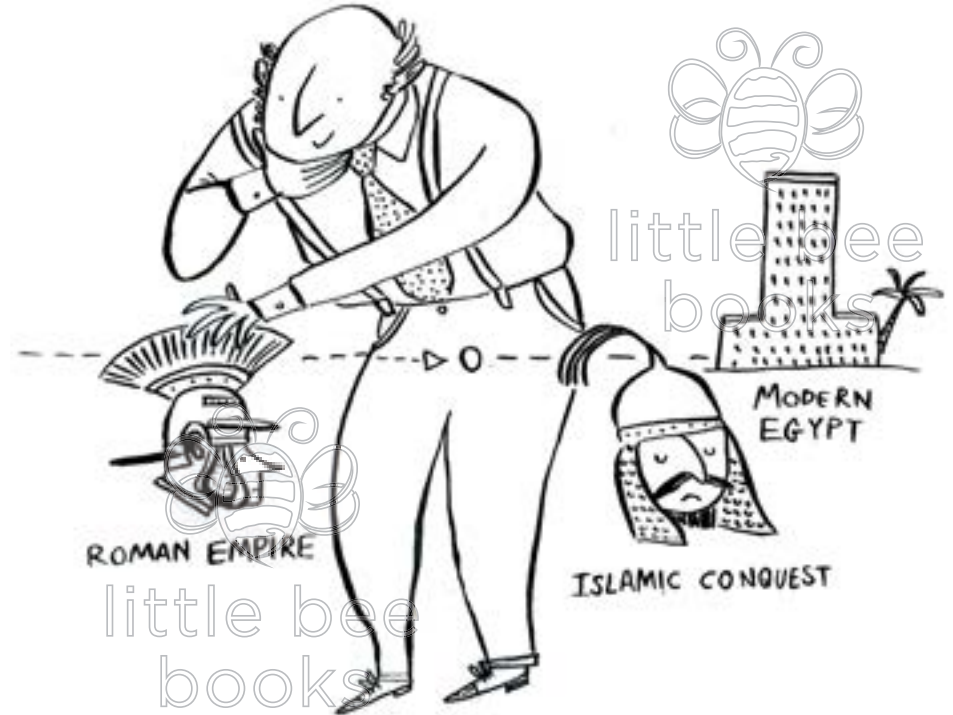


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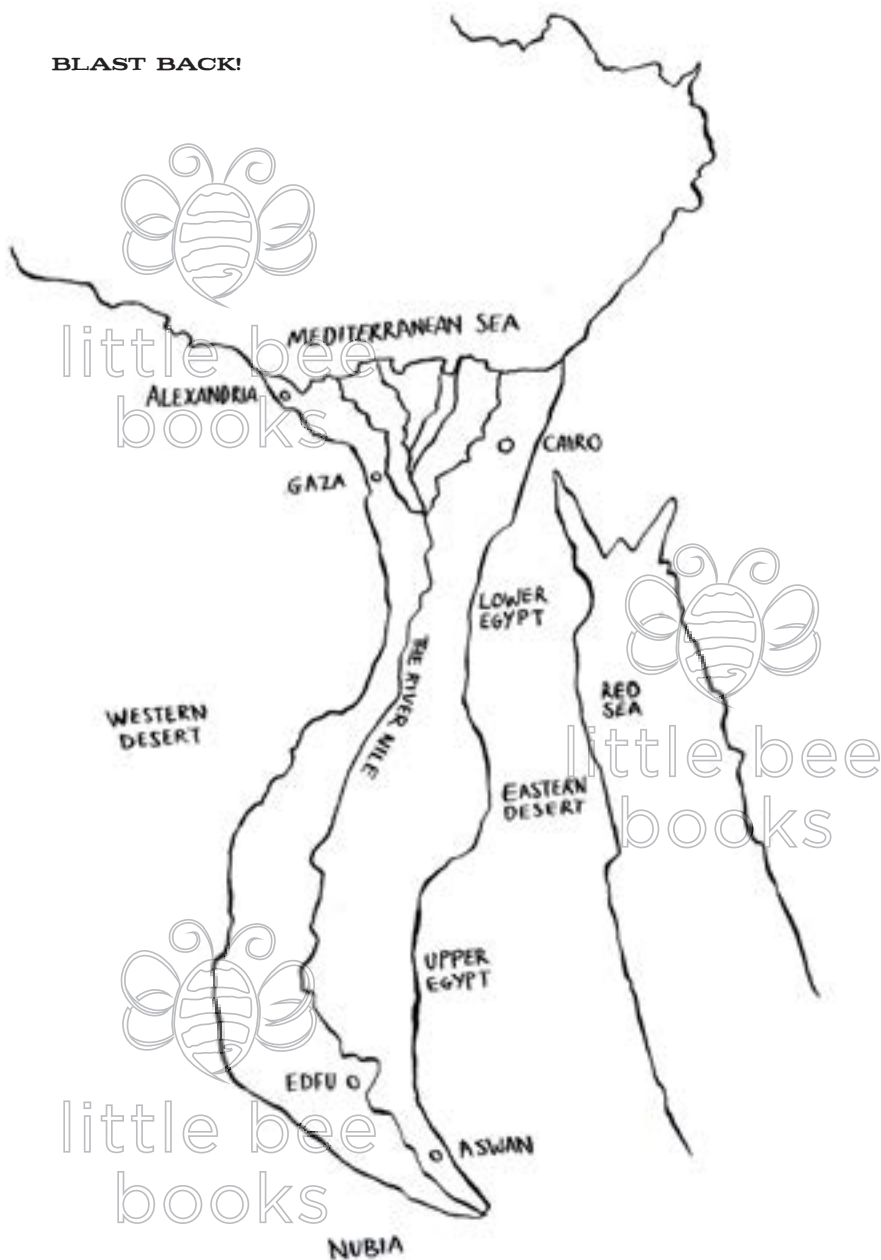


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Experts are still trying to figure out dates, names, and other details regarding Ancient Egypt. It was a long time ago, and we don't have all the necessary records and remains to be absolutely certain about everything. New discoveries and new theories continue to be made. Egyptology, the study of Ancient Egypt, is a fascinating field!



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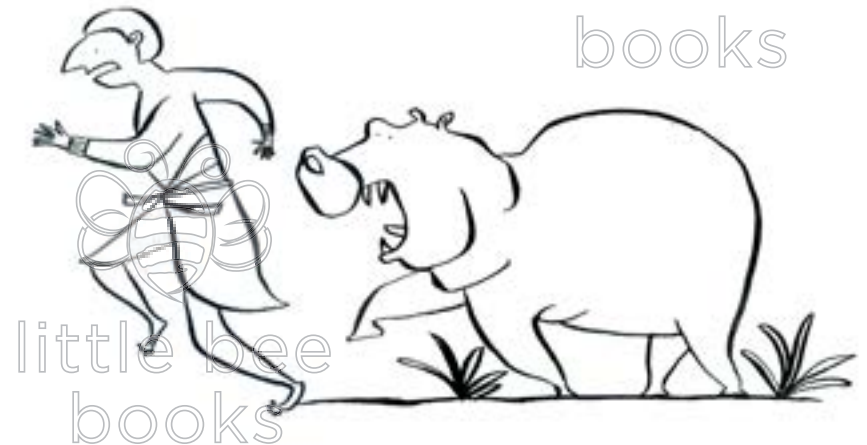
GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

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If you could see Egypt as it was thousands of years ago, you would notice a lot of interesting things.

Like today's Egypt, Ancient Egypt was in north-eastern Africa on the banks of the Nile River. Even back then, the Nile was the longest river in the world. And even back then, it was home to animals like crocodiles and hippos.

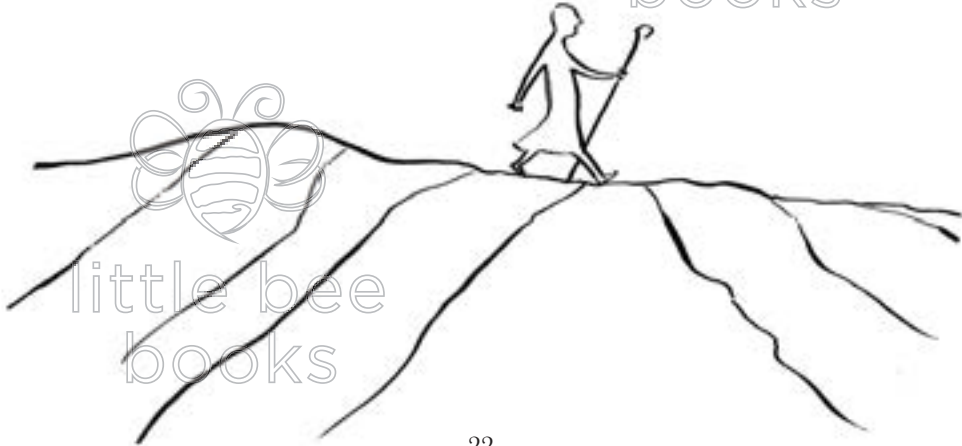
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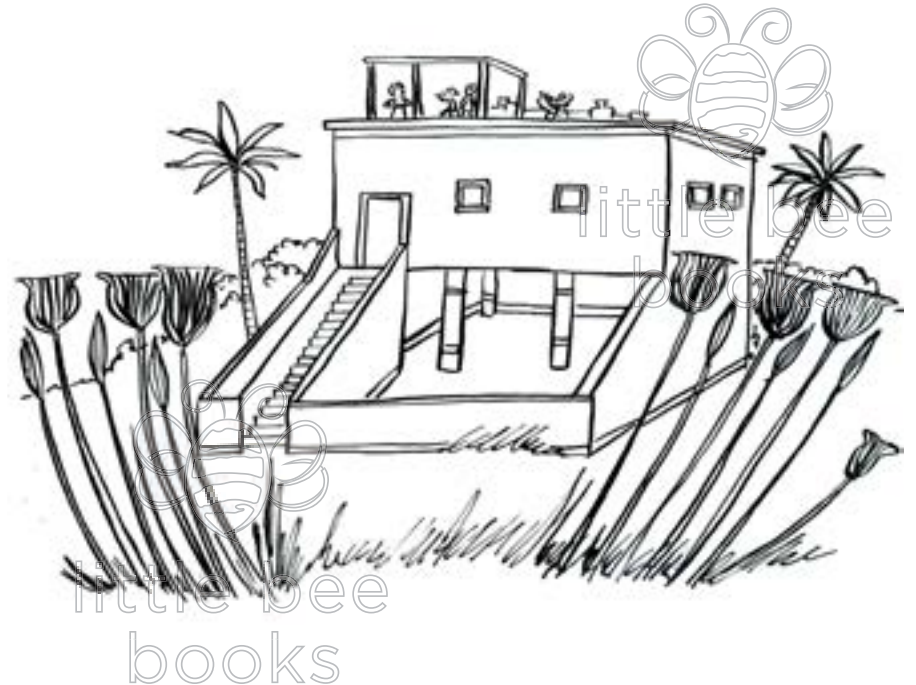
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There were farms, towns, and villages up and down the river on both sides. Beyond them was desert—miles and miles of desert. Some nomads lived in the desert.



Many houses were set on raised ground near the river and some may have been close to the edge of the desert, too. This was because the Ancient Egyptians wanted to prevent their homes from washing away during floods. (This doesn't happen anymore, thanks to a big dam that was constructed in the 1960s called the Aswan High Dam.)





The houses were built out of mud bricks, which worked well in the arid, or dry, climate. If it had rained a lot in Egypt, the mud bricks might have dissolved and turned into plain old mud!

The climate of Egypt has become even more arid over time. Weather-wise, there are two seasons: a hot summer, which goes from May to October, and a mild winter, which goes from November to April.

